CHAPTER III.

ARCHÆOLOGY OF THE HISTORICAL PERIOD: EPIGRAPHY.

Epigraphical records of the State—their character and extent.

THE State is rich in epigraphical records, almost every village in it of any importance having some few in it. Altogether over 14,000 inscriptions have been discovered in the State and many more are being found every year. They come from almost every part of the State. They have been, for the most part, included in the twelve volumes of the *Epigraphia Carnatica* issued by Mr. Rice under the authority of the Government of Mysore; the more recent discoveries are referred to in the Reports of the State Archæological Department of the last twenty years, and supplemental volumes are being projected for their publication (see Vol. IV, Chapter VIII, Section: *Archæological Department*). In the absence of other direct sources of history, they form its chief bases. Their importance is the greater because they incidentally furnish data of great historical value while their primary subject is to record grants for religious or other purposes. Inscriptions proper are really official notifications of a more or less public nature, dated or undated, reciting facts, simple or complex. They are usually found engraved and not written on stony surfaces or metal plates, being intended to be permanent records of the matters to which they refer. In the generality of cases, in this State, they are found on natural rocks, on prepared pillars or slabs set up at the spots dedicated, on temple pillars and walls and on the gateways of forts or other buildings or on metal plates. The Asōka inscriptions in this State are found engraved on the natural horizontal surface

of the rock, in three places near to one another in the Molakalmuru Taluk. The most perfect is on the top of a big boulder or gneiss at the north-west base of a hill called Brahmagiri. The Sātakarni inscriptions at Malvalli in the Shikarpur Taluk, Shimoga District, are found engraved on a pillar at that place. The fine Kadamba inscription at Tālgunda is also on a pillar. Most of the Ganga inscriptions are on copper-plates, but there are stone ones as well, *e.g.*, the Avani stone fragment (*E.C.* X, Mulbagal 263), the Sirigunda stone inscription (*E.C.* VI, Chikmagalur 50), Talkad stone inscriptions, etc. The Rāshtrakūta inscriptions in Mysore are not infrequently found engraved on cruciform stones, very artistic in appearance, and quite different from any others. The upper arm is deeply bevelled, and from one end to the other of the cross tree is engraved a large plough, a characteristic symbol of *rāshtrakūtas* or rural headmen. A typical example of their records is the excellent stone inscription at Māvali. The Chōla inscriptions, unlike those of other dynasties, instead of being on separate slabs of stones set up at the site of a grant, are mostly found inscribed on the basement and outer walls of temples in long single lines that go right round the building. The earlier ones in Mysore are generally in Kannada, but the majority are in Tamil, and there are some in the Tamil language but in Kannada characters. The Hoysala inscriptions, which cover a wide range from Tanjore in the South to Sholapur in the North and from Coorg in the West to the East Coast in South Arcot, are mostly found engraved on prepared slabs of black hornblende, and are remarkable for their beautiful and artistic execution, the whole being so skilfully engrossed that, notwithstanding ornamental flourishes and pictorial initials, no space is left for the insertion of a single additional letter. For a typical example, the Hoysala stone inscription at Sravana Belgola, in Hala

Kannada characters and Sānskrit language, may be mentioned. The Vijayanagar inscriptions are nearly as numerous as those of the Hoysalas. Their inscriptions are to be found on temple walls and floors, on detached slabs, rocks, etc. Their copper-plate grants are numerous. Inscriptions of minor dynasties are usually on detached slabs, planted erect; for example, the Sēnavāra stone inscription at Kanati (*E.C.* VI, Chikmagalur 76) with the serpent flag and lion crest cut out at the top. Inscriptions, usually short, have been found in this State, as elsewhere on the pedestals of images and statues. Numerous short inscriptions recording the visits of pilgrims to places of pilgrimage are also known. For example, at Sravana Belgola, there are numerous inscriptions of this kind, thus establishing the antiquity of this sacred place. *Vīrgals*, *Sati* Stones and Descriptive Labels underneath figure sculptures and statues have been found at many places, the last at Belur, Halebid, Sravana Belgola, etc. All these come under the head of "inscriptions" and it is to them we owe much of our present knowledge of the ancient history of Mysore and parts of Southern India adjoining it. Inscriptions on metal are generally on copper-plates of a convenient size, strung together on a metal ring, which is secured with an impression in metal of the royal seal. Being portable, these can be secured when inscriptions on stone have disappeared.

Languages used in inscriptions.

The chief languages used in inscriptions in this State are:—Sānskrit, Prākrit, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Grantha. In one inscription, found in the Shimoga District, the Marāthi language is found mixed up with Sānskrit. An epigraph at Jōdi-Manganhalli, Bangalore Taluk, is partly in Dēvanāgari and partly in Kannada. It appears to be dated in 1677 A.D. and seems to record a grant of a village by Sivāji, the great Mahratta chieftain. The Asōka inscriptions found in the State are in

the Prākrit, of the Māgadhi variety, with some local peculiarities; while the Kadamba inscriptions of Sivaskandavarman on the Malvalli Pillar, Shimoga District, dated about 250 A.D., are in the Mahārashtri form of the Prākrit language. The Sātakarni Haritīputra inscription on the same pillar, dated about 150 A.D., is also in Prākrit. A worn-out Malayālam inscription has been discovered near the entrance known as Akhandabāgilu, at Sravana Belgola. About fifteen inscriptions engraved in Gujarāti characters have been found on the pillars of a *mantap* opposite the great image Gommatēsvara at Sravana Belgola. There are two inscriptions in Burmese characters on a Burmese Bell at the Bangalore Museum. The Bell apparently belonged to a Buddhist temple in Burma and was presented to the Museum by a military officer in 1906. It is dated in the 2377th year of the Buddhist era and records its gift by the abbot of Padatawya to the pagoda standing on the Uttoranag Hill, in which the relics of Buddha were enshrined. The work of carving it is said to have been completed in 1195 of the Burmese era. Another Burmese inscription is to be found on the Burmese Bell hung in the Residency compound, Bangalore. It is dated in the 2415th year of the Buddhist era, of the 1223rd year of the Burmese year, and the 435th year inaugurated by the King Mohuyinhmindaya. The bell was cast in 1871 and suspended before the Kyantlawgyi pagoda in Mandalay Fort by a Burmese couple. On the taking of Mandalay, it was brought over by the 81st Pioneers to the Residency. A Latin inscription on a bell at one of the temples in Nagar states (*E.C.* VIII, Nagar 78) that it was made at Amsterdam in 1713 A.D. and is therefore Dutch in origin. It is one of those carried away by Tīpu Sultan from the Christian Churches of Kanara and Malabar. These Burmese and Latin inscriptions, however, do not belong to this State, but have been brought

into it in comparatively recent times. Arabic and Persian inscriptions are by no means uncommon in the State. There are many in and about Seringapatam; some at Kolar and Tumkur; a few in Shimoga; and one on the bund of the Hālebid tank in Hassan District. Some of the inscriptions at Seringapatam are in Arabic with Persian translation interlined. Some are in Arabic and some in Persian. Of these, the Arabic and Persian inscription of Sultan Muhammad Ādil Shah, son of Ibrahim Ādil Shah of Bijāpur, dated in 1632 (Shikarpur 324), is a fine one and records the erection of a fort at the Māsūr Madaga tank. An inscription partly in Persian and partly in Kannada is Channagiri 43, dated 1053 A.D. (*E.C.* VII). The Webbe monument, dated 1804, at Seringapatam (*E.C.* III, Seringapatam 26) is partly in English and partly in Persian. The Kannada inscriptions include those in Hala Kannada as well. Telugu inscriptions abound mainly in Kolar and Bangalore Districts. Most of them are in the Kannada script. Tamil inscriptions are to be found only in the Kolar, Mysore and Bangalore Districts. They are usually in Tamil or Tamil-grantha characters. Some, however, are to be found in the Kannada script, though in the Tamil language. As regards Sānskrit inscriptions, some have been found in the Nandi Nāgari characters, which was at one time more commonly in use in the State.

Eras mentioned in inscriptions.

In respect of the eras mentioned in the inscriptions of the State, in the Asōka inscriptions, the number of years since the death of Buddha are mentioned. In later inscriptions the regnal years of the kings referred to in them are given. The Sātavāhana inscriptions are, according to the practice of that early period, dated according to the seasons, besides the regnal years,—thus in one inscription (*E.C.* VII, i. Shikarpur 263) we have the description "in the second fortnight of the hot

season, the first day of the first year." Others are in the astronomical Kaliyuga reckoning, which is supposed to date from the *Mahābhārata* War in 3102 B.C. This era was in force until Varāha Mihira (505 A.D.) first introduced the use of the Saka era into astronomical works. The Saka era is found most generally used in the inscriptions of the State. The reckoning of this era begins with the vernal equinox of the Kaliyuga year 3179 or 78 A.D. As the counting, however, is by completed years, the year 1 begins with the vernal equinox of Kaliyuga 3180 or 79 A.D. In Southern India it is employed together with the *luni-solar* calendar; though in Bengal it is generally used with the solar calendar. The Chālukya-Vikrama era is mentioned in several chālukya inscriptions found in the Shikarpur Taluk. (*E.C.* VII. 70, 77, 87, 90, 98, 99 etc.) It was introduced by Chālukya Vīkramāditya VI and began with the first year of his reign in Saka 998, Rākshasa. This era is different from the Vikram samvat or the so called Vikram era, which is reckoned from the vernal equinox of the year 57 B.C. and the completion of the Kaliyuga year 3044. According to Sir John Fleet this era was founded by Kanishka, in the sense that the opening years of it were the years of his reign. (*J.R.A.S.* 1905 and 1907). Sir Vincent A. Smith entirely disagrees from this view. He dates Kanishka in 125 A.D. The Buddhist and Jaina eras date respectively from the deaths of Buddha and Mahāvīra, which are themselves more or less uncertain. Sir Vincent Smith, the latest writer on the subject, assigns 487 B.C. for the death of Buddha, and places that of Mahāvīra a few years previously but the recognized dates for these events are 544 B.C. and 527 B.C. respectively. "There are probably few writers, if any," says Sir John Fleet, "who would now care to maintain 543 B.C. as the date of the death of Buddha; that is simply a Ceylonese invention of about the twelfth century A.D.

Dates proposed more recently are 477, 508 and 487 B.C." Sir John himself inclines to the view that 482 B.C. is "the closest approximation to the truth that we are likely to attain." (*J.R.A.S.* 1906, 984.) Professor J. Charpentier favours 478 B.C., while the *Cambridge History of India* adopts 483 B.C. (see also *I.A.* 1914, 118). Charpentier thinks that Mahāvīra's death occurred in 468 B.C. Among some inscriptions in Grantha and Tamil characters found on some of the images in the *matha* at Sravana Belgola, a few are found dated in both the Mahāvīra and Saka eras. The Muhammadan inscriptions are in the Muhammadan or Hijra era. (*E.C.* X, Kolar 74 and *E.C.* VII, Shimoga 324). A stone inscription at Mattikere near Bangalore is dated both in the Saka and Christian eras. Usually in mentioning the era or the regnal year, inscriptions mention the year, the month, the day, etc., which enable calculations to be made even to an hour the exact occasion of the framing of the particular record. The Gauj Agrahāra copper-plates (*E.C.* VII, Shikarpur 45) appear to be dated by the *Katapayādi* system which yield Saka dates. Tīpu's Persian inscriptions are dated by the system of *Abjad* which yield Hijra dates. As many standard works are now available for computing Hindu and Muhammadan dates, it is unnecessary to pursue this subject further here.

The value of inscriptions.

The chief value of these inscriptions consists in the fact that they enable us to build up the history of the past, which has been traced back to the 3rd century B.C. and which but for them, owing to the lack of historical works, would be a perfect blank. Thus the story of Asōka's connection with Mysore, the rule of a line of Sātavāhana kings, who were probably Buddhists in religion and the existence of Kadamba and Ganga dynasties of kings who bore honourable rule in the State for some centuries together have all been made possible by

the inscriptions collected and deciphered in it. Similarly, the extent of the Pallava rule in Mysore, of its conquest by the Chōlas, of Hoysala dominion and rule in it, and of Vijayanagar sway over it and the semi-independent or subordinate rule of many a small principality or chieftainship in it, and many facts relating to the present ruling dynasty are indisputably proved by the inscriptions found in the State. Besides the direct light thrown on the rise and fall of kingdoms and dynasties in it, we have a vast variety of detail, about the country and the people, their manners and customs, their religions and philosophies, their superstitions and beliefs, their fasts and feasts and an infinite variety of social practices are to be found enshrined in them. But for them, the history of the State for many a century would be a perfect blank, difficult to fill, even in outline, from any other source or authority. In inscriptions we have incidentally pedigrees and succession lists of kings, chiefs and religious heads. Thus the *Sravana Belgola* inscriptions contain lists of *Pattāvalis* which give us much valuable information of early Jain *gurus*. The Ganga inscriptions give us lists of Ganga kings; the Chola, Hoysala and Vijayanagar inscriptions give similar lists of kings (*Vamsāvalis*) which apparently were taken from some known source—say, a sort of public record office. Apparently this pedigree writing seems to have commenced, so far as inscriptions are concerned, as a well recognized practice from about the 9th century A.D. The Chola inscriptions even speak to the maintenance of what would to-day be called Day Books in the Royal office in which the events were written up from day to day as they occurred. In some instances, the inference is possible that there were even dynastic archives or chronicles, from which the relationship of one dynasty to another was linked in the inscriptions. The writer of the Ganga lithic inscription (11th century A.D.) at Nagar (*E.C.* VIII, Nagar 35) is very near telling us

that he had a family pedigree of the Gangas before him as he composed that inscription when he tells us that Padmanabha's sons' line is the Ganga line—*tad anvayō gangānvayah.*

The genealogical or dynastic lists maintained by him should have furnished the long account he gives of the Gangas in this inscription. The occasion which rendered this account necessary, indicates the maintaining of such dynastic lists. The account occurs in an inscription of Nannisāntara dated in the reign of the Chālukya king Tribhuvanamalla, to whom it refers as ruling. In giving an account of the Sāntaras, in order to set forth the descent of Vīramahādevi, the wife of one of the Sāntara kings, a detailed history of the Gangas is given. The reason for such an insertion of the Ganga genealogy in an account of the Sāntaras is not far to seek. After a rule of about nine centuries, the Ganga sovereignty had in recent times been overturned by the Chōlas. On a princess of this distinguished Ganga family being married to the Sāntara king, her sister also being married to the representative of the Pallava kings, the occasion was specially appropriate for describing their long and glorious descent. Such a course would have been possible only if dynastic lists had been maintained. The account is in general agreement with what we learn from other sources and is supported by the numerous inscriptions which have been discovered of Gangas in all parts of Mysore. Similarly in the case of the Sāntaras, several inscriptions included in *E.C.* VIII, Shimoga ii (Nagar 35, Tirthahalli 192 and Sagar 159, dated in 1077, 1103 and 1159 A.D. respectively) trace back the line to Raha, an immigrant Chief from Muttra and give (in 1159 A.D.) an unbroken succession of fifteen generations from Hiranyagarbha Vikrama Sāntara, before whose accession there are interruptions in the genealogy. The setting out of such long lists would only be possible on the basis of the

maintenance of dynastic lists by the families concerned or by their bards.

The relationship of the early Vijayanagar kings to the Hoysala dynasty seems to be referred to in the statement that the Vijayanagar Kings called Dwārasamudra *Jīrna bīdu* in that they repaired the temples at Halebid and other places during the reign of Dēva Rāya. (*Mysore Archæological Report*, 1907). The mention by feudatories of their paramount chiefs and their succession shows that they should have kept an accurate record of the same. These indicate the maintenance of dynastic lists and chronicles which have not come down to us, but which are clearly referred to in inscriptions.

Materials used for recording inscriptions.

As regards the materials used for recording inscriptions, they fall under the two broad heads of (*i*) Metals and (*ii*) Substances other than metals. Gold, silver, bronze and copper are commonly the metals used for engraving inscriptions on. On gold, we have short inscriptions of the Mysore kings on valuable articles presented to the Tirupati temple. These include a gold-plated umbrella, two silver vessels and a silver-plated elephant *vāhana*. All of them bear inscriptions which show that they were presents from Krishna Rāja Wodeyar I (1713-1731) and Chāma Rāja Wodeyar VII (1731-1734). The inscription on the *vāhana* is dated in 1726 A.D. Inscriptions on two gold ornaments in the Mēlkote temple record that they were presents from Chikka Dēva Rāja Wodeyar. Similarly the two gold ornaments presented by Krishna Rāja Wodeyar III contain inscriptions recording their gift to the Mēlkote temple. Other inscriptions on a dozen silver vessels in the same temple record their gift by Muddulingamma, the lawful wife of Krishna Rāja Wodeyar III. Two other silver vessels in the same temple bear inscriptions in the Kannada language stating that they were presents

from Tīpu Sultan. An inscription on a silver pitcher in the same temple records the fact that they were gifts by the well-known Rāmāyanam Tirumalāchārya, the poet-composer of inscriptions and musician, who lived about 1720 A.D. All these records are commemorative and dedicatory and as such were intended to be long preserved in the temples to which they were given. The large majority of the seals attached to the copper-plate records, noted below, are of bronze, as copper by itself could not bring out the details of the device and legends as clearly as may be desired. Most of the extant inscriptions on metal are found engraved on sheets of copper, varying in size and in number. One is $8\frac{1}{2}''$ by $4\frac{1}{2}''$, another $8\frac{1}{4}''$ by $2\frac{1}{4}''$, a third $8\frac{1}{4}''$ by $2''$ and so on. The copper-plate inscription of Srī-vīra Sōmarāya Wodeyar, Chief of Ummattur, dated in 1463 A.D. is, for example, engraved on one plate. The spurious Tondavadi copper-plates, which profess to have been issued in the reign of the Vijayanagar King Harihara, are two in number and unequal in size. Two sets of copper-plates of Krishna Rāya, the Vijayanagar King, found at Triyambakapura, Gundlupet Taluk, dated in 1516 and 1521 A.D., are three sheets each. The Māchenahalli plates of the Sāntara King, Jayasangraha, dated in about 700 A.D., are three in number. The copper-plate of Achyuta Rāya, dated by mistake in Saka 1545 instead of 1455 (*i.e.*, 1533 A.D.) settling a dispute between Dēvāngas and Sāles is on one plate. The plates of the Chālukya King Kīrtivarma II, dated in Saka 671, are five in number, the first and last plates being inscribed on the inner side only. The plates of the Ganga King Mādhavavarma, dated about 400 A.D., are five in number. The Dalavāyi Agrahāra grant (*E.C.* III, T.-Narsipur 63) dated in 1759 A.D., is a voluminous grant on 16 copper-plates. The Tonnur grant (*E.C.* III, Seringapatam 64) dated in 1782 A.D., is on 15 copper-plates. The shape of the plates also varies from

grant to grant: not only because of the length of their contents but also on account of the fashions prevalent in different parts of the country and in different periods of time. Sometimes, too, a plate is engraved on only one side; sometimes, on both sides. Occasionally, where more than one plate is used, the plates are numbered. So far, however, no plate with the lines numbered has been found, though a few lithic inscriptions with the lines numbered have been found. Where a record covers more than one plate, it was apparently the custom to string all the plates together by one or two copper rings, passing through round holes, in imitation apparently of palm leaves strung together by threads. The size of these rings varies with the number of plates, etc. The plates of the Ganga King, Mādhavavarma, are strung together on a ring which is 3″ in diameter and ¼″ thick, and has its ends secured in the base of an oval seal measuring 1¼″ by 1″. The seal authenticates the donation referred to in the plates. Fixing the seal was the customary mode of giving royal sanction to the grant. The seals found on copper-plates are of varying kinds, some being highly elaborate, others exhibiting only devices, or legends or sometimes again both of these. The principal, if not the sole, device used was the *lānchhana* or crest, which was generally something other than what was used on the *dhvaja* or banner. But the same device was used on lithic inscriptions and coins as well by the dynasty concerned. This device usually took the form of some animal; a bull, a boar, a lion, a tiger, a fish, the bird-man Garuda, the monkey-god Hanumān, etc. Occasionally it was used on shields as well, though at present there can be cited to that effect only one indication, which is found in a lithic inscription at Belagāmi, where in the sculptures, showing a battle scene in the bottom compartment of that stone, the shields on the right side distinctly bear animals, which are apparently

in one case a lion and in the other a boar. A few examples of devices may be usefully added here. Thus, the seal on the Ganga plates of Mādhavavarma III referred to above bears in relief a standing elephant which faces the proper right. The Ganga copper-plates of Narasapura (*E.C.* X, Kolar 90) also bear the same seal. The elephant was the favourite Ganga device. The Hoysala device on copper-plate grants shows a dead tiger and the rod (as in *E.C.* IX, Bangalore 6). The Hoysala crest on temples exhibits, however, a free standing group of Sala, the founder of the dynasty stabbing the tiger (as in the Vīrabhadra temple at Halebid) and perhaps finishing it off with his dagger (as in *E.C.* V, Belur 171). The seal of Chikka Dēva Rāja Wodeyar, the Mysore King, was the figure of a boar standing to the left. The copper-plates of the Chalukya King, Kīrtivarma II, referred to above, which are five in number, are strung on a ring which is $4\frac{3}{4}''$ in diameter and $\frac{1}{2}''$ thick which ends in the base of an elliptical seal measuring $1\frac{1}{2}''$ by $1\frac{1}{4}''$. The worn-out seal shows the boar on it rather indistinctly. In the Inām Office plate of the Vijayanagar King Harihara II, the upper portion of the seal is occupied by the sun and the crescent moon with a dagger between, while in the lower portion, the legend *Sri-Vīra-Harihara Sri* is engraved in three lines in Kannada characters. On the seal of the ring on which the Kadamba Hire Sakune Plates (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 33) are strung, the King's name *Sri-Mrigēsvara Varmani* is also to be seen. Some copper-plates are found further authenticated by what purports to be more or less the autograph signature of the king or chief issuing them. These are accompanied sometimes by marks intended to represent the sign manual of the king. The signatures are sometimes in characters different from the body of the record. The Virupāpura copper-plates of the Vijayanagar King Harihara II are signed *Sri Virūpāksha* in Kannada characters. (*E.C.* VIII,

Tirthahalli 201). The Tūdūr copper-plates of the Vijayanagar King, Dēva Rāya II, are signed *Sri Virūpāksha* in Kannada characters. (*E.C.* VIII, Tirthahalli 200.) The Puttigematha copper-plates of Kēladi Sadāsiva Rāya Nāyaka, dated in 1575 A.D., are signed *Sri Sadāsiva* in Kannada characters. (*E.C.* VIII, Tirthahalli 204). The Puttigematha copper-plates of Vijayanagar King, Dēva Rāya III, dated in 1463 A.D., are signed at the end *Sri Virūpāksha* in Kannada characters. (*E.C.* VIII, Tirthahalli No. 206.) Numerous copper-plates in possession of the Kavaledurg Mahant Matha (*E.C.* VIII, Tirthahalli 40 to 99) are regularly signed by the Kēladi chief *Sri-Venkatādri, Sri-Sadāsiva* and *Sri-Vīrabhadra.* A copper-plate inscription of the Vijayanagar King Sri Ranga Rāya, dated in 1534 A.D., is signed by the King at the end in Kannada characters—*Sri Virūpāksha.* One of the Vijayanagar Kings, Venkatapathi Rāya I, dated in 1589 A.D., is signed by him *Sri Venkatēsa* in Kannada characters. The copper-plate inscription of Nārāyana Wodeyar, nephew of the Vijayanagar King Harihara II, dated in 1397 A.D., has the sign of Nārāyana Wodeyar as *Triambaka.* A copper-plate of the Mysore King Dodda Dēva Rāja Wodeyar, dated in 1663 A.D., has at the end of it the King's signature *Sri-Dēva-Rāja* in Kannada characters. One of Chikka Dēva Rāja Wodeyar, dated in 1675 A.D. has at the end, the King's signature in Kannada character *Sri-Chikka Dēva Rājah.*

Stone inscriptions are called *Silā-sāsana* or *Silā-lipta* (*e.g.*, *E.C.*, Kolar 74 and 72). Another name is *Kallu Sāsana,* stone charter (*E.C.* IV, Hassan 18). *Vīrakal,* hero-stone (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 18) and *Vīra-Sāsana,* charter or record of heroism (*E.C.* VII, Shikarpur 144) are names given to inscriptions on stones recording grants for heroism displayed. Copper-plates are commonly known as *tāmra-sāsana* (copper-inscription) or *tāmra-pattika* (copper-tablet). (*E.C.* VII, Shikarpur 29). A

grant to a Siva temple is called a *Siva-sāsana* (*E.C.* VII, Shimoga, Shikarpur 103, dated in 1149 A.D.). Thus grants in favour of the Kēdārēsvara temple at Balagāmi are called *Siva-sāsana, i.e.*, a *Sāsana* recording a work of *Siva-dharma* referred to in it (*e.g.*, *E.C.* VII, Shimoga, Shikarpur 99 of 1113 A.D.). Similarly most of the Jain inscriptions apply the words *Jina-sāsana* to them. (See *Inscriptions at Sravana Belgola*, New Edition, *et passim.*) A *sāsana* which limits the contents of a former *Sāsana*, is called a *Koretaya-sāsana, i.e.*, because certain limitations and conditions are mentioned in it. (*E.C.* VI, Kadur, Tarikere 43 dated 1210 A.D.) Speaking of the spoken word of the general Amrita, Tarikere 45 dated in 1196 A.D., *E.C.* VI, Kadur, says :—

"What he said was in one place like a *copper-sāsana*, in another place like a *stone-sāsana*; in giving and protecting he was like a *nara-sāsana* (or human *sāsana*), while the tongue that uttered his praise was a permanent *copper-sāsana*."

The writer of a copper-plate was known as a *Kavi-sāsana* (See Chapter V; *Literature*). Seringapatam 119, dated in 1108 A.D., (*E.C.* III) which records a grant of land, shows clearly how inscriptions were usually got ready for inscribing on plates or stones. An inscription is called a *lēkana*, or if the Tamil form is meant, *ilēkana*, properly *lēkhana*, writing. It was the work of one *Sēnabova*, the modern Shanbhog or village accountant. It was put in the stone by another *Sēnabova*, and incised by a stone-mason. This indicates the probable usual method of procedure in the case of inscriptions. The composition was the work of some *pandit* or court-poet. Thus the composer of Tarikere 45 (*E.C.* VI) dated in 1196 A.D. was Jannaya "the friend of good poets." It was written out on the stone or copper-plates, either by himself or by some other educated man, from the copy supplied, and finally engraved, if on stone, by a stone

mason or carpenter, or if on copper-plates, by a coppersmith or other worker in metal. Thus, the writer of Tarikere 45 is described as Mahādēvanna's disciple Nakanna, while the engraver calls himself "the confounder of titled engravers the sculptor Mallōja" (*E.C.* VI, Kadur). The practice is made clearer from the statements recorded in various other inscriptions—such as Seringapatam 64 dated in 1722 A.D., Mandya 70 dated in 1276 A.D., Tirumakudlu-Narsipur 63 dated in 1748 A.D., etc., etc. It was thus usual to give the name of the composer of the inscription, the engraver, and the executant and the witnesses to it. Nanjangud 89 (*Circa* 16th century) and 139 (about 915 A.D.) call an inscription as an *ōle* and the boundaries mentioned in it as written on an *ōle*, *i.e.*, a palmyra leaf book. These are indications of the material used for records or copies, and the statements may be collated with what is stated above. T.-Narsipur copper-plate grant was, we are told, written by the Mysore King, Dēva Rāya, in his own hand, in Ārya letters and sealed with the Earth and Boar seal. There is reason to believe that there were court engravers, who signed themselves "Visvakarmāchārya," and as their signatures appear both in the copper-plates of Kadambas and Gangas, it has been surmised that they passed from the service of the Kadambas to the Gangas (*E.C.* IV, Mysore ii, Intd. 7). Part at least of the work of the engraver of a lithic inscription was to beautify the slab to be inscribed upon. For instance, the slab on which Sravana Belgola 327 dated 1181 A.D. is inscribed, has an elegantly carved semi-circular top in the middle of which is a seated Jina figure, flanked by male Chauri-bearers with an elephant to the right and a cow and a calf to the left (Inscriptions at Sravana Belgola, New Edition). Sometimes inscriptions on stone (as for example, those of the Kēladi chiefs, see *E.C.* VIII, Sorab 65) are signed at the end by the granter. Copper-plates

are almost invariably authenticated, as stated above, by the signature of the kings issuing them. These copper-plates usually record grants to private parties whose title-deeds to immoveable property they really are. They are thus donative charters and as such pass into the hands of private parties immediately they are issued. One reason why their existence becomes known is that they are invariably brought out to support some private claim or other before public authorities. Some have been found buried in fields (as the Kadamba Hire Sakuna plates, mentioned in *E.C.* VIII, Sorab, 33), others (such as the Dalavāyi Agrahār grant) have been discovered at the bottom of disused wells, still others hidden in the walls and foundations of buildings. From their very nature, these grants are likely to pass from hand to hand and altogether get, in course of time, entirely disconnected with the places to which they actually relate. Thus, the so-called Vakkalēri plates of the Chālukya King, Kīrtivarman II, dated in A.D. 757, relate to a place on the north bank of the Bhīma, near Sholapur. They, however, were found in the village of Vakkalēri in Kolar District, far away from the place of the grant. Similarly the Ganga plates of the 7th year of Srīpurusha, 733 A.D., found at Gubbi, in the present Tumkur District, refer to Ballānavolal, in the district of Keregodu, identical with the village of that name in the present Mandya Taluk of Mysore District. Several of the boundary villages mentioned in the plates are still in existence. Thus, while a stone inscription might fix up the sovereignty or other jurisdiction of any king or chief at the place where it is found, a copper-plate, on account of its transferable character, cannot do this, unless the places mentioned in it are actually identified. To obviate the inconvenience caused by the naming of these plates after the places where they are found, it has been suggested that it would be better to name them

(and re-name all the old ones as well) after the names of the places to which they relate. Thus, the very Vakkalēri plates above referred to would, if this classification be adopted, be called the Sulliyūr grant.

On a bronze pillar in front of the Venkataramana Temple at Govardhanagiri (*E.C.* VIII, Sagar 55) there is an inscription, which among the inscriptions on metal, stands out by itself. It records the grant of the village of Kenchanahalli as an *agrahāra* by Kēladi Sadāsiva Rāya Nāyaka to Udipi Krishna Dēva, Paramahamsa Vādirājat rtha Srīpāda, and Raghunidhitīrtha Srīpāda of Bankapur, dated in the reign of the Vijayanagar King Tirumala Rāya, 1571 A.D. Chief among the substances other than metal on which inscriptions are found is stone. The devices and symbols—*i.e.*, the dynastic crest, the Linga, Sun and Moon—are usually sculptured in relief, while the inscription itself is engraved. The Muhammadan inscriptions are nearly always carved in relief.

Three inscriptions of the 15th century, found on the beams of the enclosure surrounding the Gommatēsvara, on the Vindhyagiri, at Sravana Belgola, are *written in ink*, perhaps the only inscriptions of the kind found in the State.

Stone inscriptions are, as stated above, called *silā-sāsana* and *silā-lipta* and are usually fixed up in particular places. The chances of their removal from place to place as in the case of copper-plates are not great. But those built into temple walls, running through temple walls, have shown a tendency to get scattered when the temples containing them have been pulled down and repaired. Many examples of this kind can be quoted from the inscriptions at the Kolāramma temple, Kolar, and elsewhere also in that and other Districts. Inscribed slabs thus displaced have been sometimes carved out into images. Thus in the Ānjanēya temple at Benakankere,

Turuvekere Sub-Division, an inscription has been found on both sides of the image of Ānjanēya. The image has been carved out of a thick inscribed stone of the Hoysala period, the front face being made into the image and the inscribed sides left as they were. Another instance is that of the Jain image carved out of an inscribed slab at Sankigatta, Bangalore District. The inscription is of the period of the Hoysala King, Narasimha I (1141-1173) and the image of Vardhamāna carved out of it is of a later date. A Chōla inscription is engraved on the back of a figure of Hanumān enshrined in a temple at Chēlur. It is a Tamil record, dated in 1084 A.D., referring itself to the Chōla King Kulōttunga I. The fragmentary nature of the epigraph, which is wanting in portions at the sides, top and bottom, affords clear evidence of the image having been carved out of the inscriptive stone. (See *M.A.R.* 1921, Para 12.) Many other instances of inscribed stones or slabs having been converted into pedestals of images, jambs of doorways etc., can be easily quoted.

Stone inscriptions are found on rocks; on isolated monolithic columns and pillars; on the walls of caves; on pedestals and other parts of images and statues, sometimes of colossal size; on walls, beams, pillars, pilasters and other parts of temples; and on specially prepared slabs and tablets, sometimes built into the walls of temples and other erections, sometimes set up inside temples or in their courtyards, or in conspicuous places in village sites and fields, where in process of time they have sometimes become buried. Numerous instances of most of these kinds of stone inscriptions can be easily given. The Humcha stone inscription, dated in 1077 A.D., for instance, is on a stone in the yard of the Panchabasti. (*E.C.* VIII, Nagar 35.) The Kāvadi inscription, dated in 420 A.D., is on a stone near a private house. (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 523.) The Kāntanahalli

stone inscription is rather interesting as it is a signed one. (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 55, dated in 1571 A.D.). A Tamil inscription of about 1170 A.D., on a stone set up near the Malur bridge, records the grant of land to the local temple. (*M.A.R.* for 1909, Para 79.) Instances of this kind can be easily multiplied. It ought to suffice if only a few additional points are mentioned. Thus amongst the most noteworthy inscriptions on rocks are those of Asōka at Brahmagiri, Siddāpura, and Jatinga-Rāmēsvara in Molakalmuru Taluk, Chitaldrug District, dated (see *J.R.A.S.* 1904, 26) 256 years after the death of Buddha, which according to Sir John Fleet occurred in 482 B.C., and somewhat more than thirty-eight years after the anointment of Asōka to the sovereignty in 264 B.C., and was framed when, having abdicated, he was living in religious retirement, as a fully admitted member of the Buddhist order, at Suvarnagiri, Srigir, one of the hills surrounding the ancient city of Girivraja, in Magadha. The various inscriptions on the Chandragiri hill at Sravana Belgola, Hassan District (*E.C.* II, Inscriptions at Sravana Belgola, Nos. 1-59, New Edition), including the epitaph of the Jain teacher Prabhāchandra, which commemorates also the migration of Digambara Jains to Mysore and their settlement at Sravana Belgola, are also worthy of note. On columns and pillars, we have first the well-known Tālgunda inscription (*E.C.* VIII, Shikarpur No. 176), which describes the rise of the Kadamba dynasty. Next we have the Sātakarni inscription at Malavalli in the Shikarpur Taluk, Shimoga District (*E.C.* VIII, Shikarpur 263) engraved on the shaft of a six-sided pillar, of an indurated dark stone, about 6 feet in height. At Sravana Belgola, we have the epitaphs of the great Western Ganga prince, Nolambāntaka Marasimha II, incised about 975 A.D. (*E.I.* V, 151 and *E.C.* II, Inscriptions at Sravana Belgola No. 59, New Edn.—Old Edn. 38) and of the Jain teacher

Mallisēna, incised about 1129 A.D. (*E.C.* II, Sravana Belgola No. 67, New Edn). On the Vindhyagiri, Sravana Belgola, on the rock outside the first entrance of Odegal basti, there are ten inscriptions in characters "older than those of the oldest inscription hitherto known on this Hill." On a rock in the bed of the river at Rāmanāthpur, two inscriptions have been found. Amongst inscriptions on pedestals and other parts of statues and images, special mention may be made of the colossal statue of Gommatēsvara at Sravana Belgola (*E.C.* II, Inscriptions at Sravana Belgola, Nos. 175-177 and Nos. 179-180, New Edition). The inscriptions underneath it are in Nāgari, Marāthi, Pūrvada Hala Kannada, Grantha and Vattelattu, and Hala Kannada. The date of its execution was about 983 A.D. An inscription dated in 1160 A.D., in the reign of the Hoysala King, Narasimha, is engraved near the left foot of the Gommatēsvara. It is similar to the inscriptions mentioned above and mentions the fact that the great minister Hullamayya received the village Savaneru from Narasimha I and granted it to the Gommata (*M.A.R.* 1909, Para 78). Ten inscriptions, also of the time of Narasimha I, are engraved on the pedestal of the images in the cloisters around Gommatēsvara. They give the names of the images with those of the men who set them up. The date of these records is about 1170 A.D. An inscription, of the reign of Ballāla II, engraved on the pedestal of the image in Akkanna basti, records that it was built by one Āchāmba, wife of the minister Chandramauli. An inscription on a broken image at Jakkikatte, Sravana Belgola, shows that it was dedicated to Vrishabhaswāmi, by Jakki (or Jakkigavve) the minister Ganga Rāja's elder brother's wife (*M.A.R.* for 1901, Para 77). Five short inscriptions found engraved at the Tirukkachinambi temple at Mēlkote, are on the pedestals of the images representing Krishna Rāja Wodeyar III and his four queens. Thirteen others on the pillar in front

of the same temple, assigned to the reign of the Vijayanagar King, Mallikārjuna, indicate severally different incidents in the life of Arjuna represented by the sculptures underneath which they are engraved. (*M.A.R.* for 1908, Para 61). Similar inscriptions have been found on the pillars of the *mantap* in front of the Lakshmidēvi temple at the same place. (*M.A.R.* for 1907, Para 31). Numerous inscriptions indicating the names of sculptors who were responsible for the work under which their names are found are to be seen in several of the more famous temples in the State. As regards the size of slabs on which inscriptions are found engraved, the stone containing Davangere 39, about 15 feet height, is perhaps the tallest of the inscribed slabs in the State. (*E.C.* XI, Chitaldrug.)

An inscription—consisting of four Brāhmi letters—on a clay seal has been found at the ancient site of Chandravalli, near modern Chitaldrug. The "Seal" has been described as "a large circular" one, found at a depth of 6 feet with a lead coin. "The Seal has a hole at the top and just below it some marks which look like four Brāhmi letters. There is an elephant standing to the left, in front of which a soldier is seen standing armed with some weapon. On the back of the seal is an ornamental circle with some indistinct symbol in the centre." Seeing that the lead coin with which the "Seal" was found is a Mahārathi coin belonging to the Buddhist line of Sātavāhana or Āndhrabhrityas, who ruled over Western Mysore in ancient days, the "Seal" may really be a "votive offering." (*Cf.* Fleet in *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, II, 37).

The contents of Inscriptions.

The topics dealt with in inscriptions may be briefly considered now. Some are plain statements of events. Though these may allude to religion and to donations, they are not specially directed to such ends. To this class

belongs the Tālgunda inscriptions already referred to, (*E.C.* VIII, Shikarpur 176) which, directed primarily to recording the construction of a great tank, recites, by way of introduction, the origin and rise to power of the early Kadamba dynasty of Banavāsi. To the same class belongs the panegyric of the great Western Ganga prince Nolambāntaka Mārasimha at Sravana Belgola, and the epitaphs of the Jain teachers Prabhāchandra and Mallisēna and many others recorded in the *Sravana Belgola* volume of *Epigraphia Carnatica Series* (*E.C.* II). Under this head also come the *Vīrakals* or *Vīrgals* or hero-stones found so largely in the State: *e.g.*, the *Vīrakal* at Māvali, dated in about 800 A.D., is a spirited representation of how Kalemudda fell fighting in an exciting battle, at the bidding of Kakkarasa, the Nolamba Pallava general (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 10). Similarly the Baradavalli *Vīrakal*, dated in 1300 A.D., is an equally good representation of how Madigauda at the bidding of Jagadāla Gāngēya Sāhani, the great minister of Kāva Dēvarasa fell fighting against Ballāla Dēva, who marched on Kadabalalu (*E.C.* VIII, Sagar 45). The Hunavalli *Vīrakal*, in front of the Kallēswara temple at that place, dated in 985 A.D., is another interesting Vīrakal recording how, when Tailapa Dēva was King of Banavāsi, one Piyana, seeing certain murderers, fought and killed them both, stabbing them with his dagger (*E.C.* VIII, Sorab 529). A number of Kālachūrya inscriptions in Shimoga District (*E.C.* VIII) are in the nature of *Vīrakals*. Many of them record attacks on Gutti (*i.e.*, Chandragutti) and others refer to fights with Hoysala officers. Under this head must also be set down the grant of *rakta-kodagi* (rent-free land) recorded in *E.C.* IV, Yelandur 29, dated in 1654 A.D., which states that a farmer having been put to death unjustly by a Muhammadan official, a *rakta-kodagi* was granted to his son as compensation. In 1757, orders had been sent from the

Bednur Court to arrest an offender who was defying the law, but the local official, on capturing him, beheaded him. For this he seems to have been deprived of some land he owned. He afterwards petitioned that the *pagadi* money for the time the land was put out of season should be given to him. This was refused, with an order that petitions of this kind from the country for payment of money must not be made. The details of the event and the order are recorded in *E.C.* VIII, Shikarpur 209 and 201. In 1020 A.D., under Chōla rule in Mysore, a dog, which had run away on the death of its master, was appropriated by a local chief. As a penalty for this, the King's officer on the spot went into his residence, dragged out the dog, burnt the place, and seizing fifty golden images belonging to the offender, sent them to the King. The event is recorded in *E.C.* IV, Hunsur 10. In *E.C.* III, Malvalli 21 and 22, dated in 1358, we have the account of a number of tanks made by one Bhatta and the trees he planted on the four sides, etc. In *E.C.* XI, Challakere 43 and 44, dated in 1653, we have an account of the tank called Vali Surur, in Channagiri taluk, built by Bari Mālik, the Bijāpur Governor. Several other records registering the carrying out of public works fall under this head; *e.g.*, water-supply scheme for Penukonda carried out in 1388 (*E.C.*, X, Goribidnur 6); Harihar dam at Harihara, (*E.C.* XI, Davangere 23, 29) built in 1410 and restored in 1424; the rebuilding of a dam on the Pālār (*E.C.* X, Mulbagal 72, in 1416); building of a new dam across the Cauvery in 1460 by a Nagamangala chief (*E.C.* III, Seringapatam 139); etc.

The great majority of epigraphic records refer, however, to the religious instinct of the Hindus, and to their ardent desire for making endowments on every auspicious occasion. Foremost among these are the Asōka inscriptions at Siddapura and near about, already referred to

above. Their motive, however, is partly religious and they are in no sense donative. Of the historical importance of these records, Sir John Fleet writes that they were "framed and issued when he had been converted to Buddhism and had been led to formally join the Buddhist order, and when, having taken the vows of a monk, he had abdicated, and was spending his remaining days in religious retirement in a cave-dwelling on Suvarnagiri (Sōngīr), one of the hills surrounding the ancient city of Girivraja in Magadha (Bihar). This record was issued to proclaim Buddhism as the true religion, and Buddha, 'the Wanderer,' the ascetic teacher exiled by his own choice from the house-life into the houseless state, as the great exponent of it. And it has its historical value in the fact that it was framed (*see J.R.A.S.* 1904, 26, 355) when 256 years had elapsed after the death of Buddha, and 38 years after the anointment of Asōka to the sovereignty and, it may be added, on the first anniversary of his abdication. It thus confirms exactly, and carries back to the time of Asōka himself, the statement of the Ceylonese chronicle, the *Dīpavamsa*, that 218 years intervened between the death of Buddha and the anointment of Asōka. Corroborating the *Dīpavamsa* in that important matter, it enables us to accept with considerable confidence the historical details given for the intervening period by the same chronicle. And it enables us to determine (*see J.R.A.S.*, 1926, 984 ff.), with due regard to all the considerations that have to be harmonized, and to put forward as the closest approximations that we are likely to attain, 482 B.C. for the death of Buddha, alongside of 320 B.C. for the foundation of the Maurya sovereignty by Chandragupta, and 264 B.C. for the anointment of Asōka." To the composing of a communal difference between the Jains and Vaishnavas by the Vijayanagar King Bukka-Rāya, after hearing evidence on both sides,

we owe the interesting record, *E.C.* II, Sravana Belgola 136, Old Edn. (and 344 New Edn.) which sets out the decree of reconciliation passed by him. Trial by ordeal has given us a number of records. *E.C.* VIII, Sorab 387 and *E.C.* III, Mandya 79, dated in 1241 and 1275 A.D. respectively refer to the order of making oath in the presence of the God, holding at the same time the consecrated food, which would choke the accused on partaking it, if he spoke the untruth. The ordeal of grasping a red-hot iron bar in the presence of the God Hoysalēsvara is mentioned in a record of 1309 (*M.A.R* for 1908). That of plunging the hand in boiling *ghee* (clarified butter) is mentioned in records of 1518 and 1667 (*E.C.* IV, Yelandur 2, and *E.C.* V, Arkalgud 2. 3). We owe a number of records at Sravana Belgola (*E.C.* II, New Edn. *et passim*) to the desire of pilgrims from distant parts commemorating their visits to the sacred Gommatēsvara.

Next we come to records whose object was to register donations and endowments made to Gods, to priests on behalf of temples or charitable institutions, and to religious communities. Thus, some of the charters of the early Kadamba Kings of Banavāsi were issued to convey lands and villages to the God Jinēndra, and to members of various Jain sects for the maintenance of the worship of that God (*I.A.* VI, 24; *I.A.* VII, 33). Countless numbers of inscriptions of this kind, of almost every period of Hindu history, can be quoted as further illustration of this class of records, but it is deemed unnecessary as any volume of the *Epigraphia Carnatica* will be found to yield literally hundreds of them, in which, history has been recorded only as an incidental matter in connection with the religious benefactions to which they primarily relate.

There are, besides, some records in which grants to private persons are registered which have no manner of

connection with religion. The supplementary inscription on the Ātakur stone (A.D. 949-50) records that the Rāshtrakūta King, Krishna III, gave to the Western Ganga Prince Būtuga II, the Banavāse, Twelve-thousand province, the Purigore, Three-hundred, the Kisukad Seventy, and the Bāgenād Seventy, as a reward for slaying the Chōla King Rājāditya in open warfare. The Malavalli pillar-inscription of King Hāritīputta, of the Vinhukad-dachūtu line of the Sātakarni Kings (*E.C.* VII, Shikarpur 263) was intended to register a grant of a group of villages to a Brāhman. And the record of the Kadamba King Sivaskandavarman, on the same pillar (*E.C.* VII, Shikarpur 263) was published to record the grant and to confirm the enjoyment of it by a descendant of the original grantee "for the enjoyment of the god" (see Luger's *Brāhmī Inscriptions* Nos. 1195 and 1196). The Vakkalēri plates already referred to, dated A.D. 757, which give the full direct lineal succession of the Western Chālukyas of Bādāmi from the paramount King Pulakēsin I, to the last of the line, were intended to register the grant of some land to one of his followers. The *rakta-kodugi* grants already referred to, in so far as they are grants for heroism displayed in the battle-field, fall under this head.

Essential nature of inscriptions.

A few words may be added as to the essential nature of inscriptions. The donative records, which are, as above stated, the most numerous, are a mass of title-deeds of real property, and of certificates of the right to duties, taxes, fees, perquisites and other privileges. The copper-plate grants are the actual title-deeds and certificates themselves. The stone inscriptions are usually of the same nature, but they sometimes mention the concurrent bestowal of a copper-plate charter. In such cases, they are, rather, a public intimation that the transaction had been made complete and valid by the

private assignment of the necessary title-deeds and certificates. The essential part of the records was, of course, the specification of the details of the donor, of the donee, and of the donation. Among the donative records, the most numerous are those which have been appositely described as records of royal donations, *i.e.*, grants which were made either by the kings themselves, or by the great feudatory nobles, or by provincial governors and other high officials who had the royal authority to alienate State lands and to assign allotments from the State revenue. Burnell suggested that the reason why gifts of this nature were so largely made by kings was to acquire religious merit or to attain the objects they aimed at. The tendency for gifts to take the place of the sacrifices which, according to the epic poems, and according to some of the earlier records, the kings of India used to have performed in order to acquire religious merit, or to attain other objects, became, as time went on, increasingly more pronounced. Sir John Fleet agrees in this view, and remarks:—

"Whatever the reason, the fact remains, that the records of royal donations whether for religious or other purposes, are the most numerous of all. And many of them register, not simply the gifts of small holdings, but grants of entire villages, and large and permanent assignments from the public revenues. It is to these facts that we are indebted for the great value of the records from the historical point of view. The donor of State lands, or of an assignment from the public revenues, must show his authority for his acts. A provincial governor or other high official must specify his own rank and territorial jurisdiction, and name the king under whom he holds office. A great feudatory noble will often give a similar reference to his paramount sovereign, in addition to making his own position clear. And it is neither inconsistent with the dignity of a king, nor unusual, for something to be stated about his pedigree in charters and patents issued by him or in his name. The precepts of the law books, quoted by Dr. Burnell from the

chapters relating to the making of grants, prescribe in fact that a king should state the names of his father, his grandfather, and his great-grand-father as well as his own (*Elements of South Indian Palæography*, 97). That, no doubt, was a rule deduced from custom, rather than a rule on which custom was based. But we find that, from very early times, the records do give a certain amount of genealogical information. More and more information of that kind was added as time went on. And the recital of events was introduced, to magnify the glory and importance of the donors, and sometimes to commemorate the achievements of the recipients."

It is mainly from these records, which only incidentally mention facts relating to ruler and subjects, that the ancient history of Mysore—rather of India generally speaking—is being put together by scholars who have made them their life-study.